

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 03128 171307Z

22

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TUEHTP/AMEMBASSY TAIPEI 52

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL GOTEBORG

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 3128

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SCUL CH TW DA

SUBJ: DANISH DENIAL OF ENTRY TO TAIWANESE OPERA

SUMMARY: THE DANISH GOVERNMENT IS EMBARRASSED TO FIND ITSELF
IN A SITUATION OF BARRING THE ENTRY OF A TAIWANESE OPERA
GROUP WHICH REPORTEDLY WILL BE ADMITTED BY DENMARK'S
SCANDINAVIAN NEIGHBORS. THIS EMBARRASSMENT MAY BE HEIGHTENED
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 COPENH 03128 171307Z

IF THE LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY SUCCEEDS IN DEMONSTRAT-

ING THAT A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY WANTS THE TAIWANESE ADMITTED. END SUMMARY.

1. OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS AN ISSUE HAS BEEN PERCOLATING WHICH MAY PROVIDE SOME POLITICAL EXCITEMENT HERE OVER THE NEXT WEEK. THE DANISH GOVERNMENT HAS FOUND ITSELF IN A POSITION OF DECLINING TO ADMIT AN OPERA GROUP FROM TAIWAN THAT REPORTEDLY WILL GIVE PERFORMANCES IN HELSINKI, OSLO AND GOTEBOG. ACCORDING TO DANISH MFA SOURCES, WHEN THE QUESTION OF RECEIVING SUCH AN OPERA GROUP WAS POSTED A NUMBER OF MONTHS AGO BY AN AUSTRIAN TOUR ENTREPRENEUR, THE EC CONSULTED INFORMALLY AND CONCLUDED THAT ALLOWING SUCH A GROUP TO PERFORM IN ANY OF THE NINE WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE. THEY RECOGNIZED THE DESIRABILITY OF FULL FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO ANY OF THE COUNTRIES BY PRIVATE PERSONS AND GROUPS FROM TAIWAN. BUT THE AUSTRIAN ENTREPRENEUR'S INSISTENCE ON IDENTIFYING THE GROUP AS REPRESENTING THE "REPUBLIC OF CHINA" WAS ACCORDED MORE WEIGHT THAN SUCH A FREEDOM.

2. WHILE THE NINE WERE REACHING THIS CONCLUSION, DENMARK'S SCANDINAVIAN NEIGHBORS HAVE, SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY, APPARENTLY ARRIVED AT A CONTRARY ONE. THE DANES BELIEVE THAT THE SWEDES AND THE FINNS HAVE "SIMPLY MADE A WRONG JUDGMENT". IN THE CASE OF NORWAY, SAY THE DANES, THE NORWEGIAN CONSULATE GENERAL IN HONG KONG AWARDED VISAS WITHOUT REFERRING THE CASE TO OSLO.

3. THE LEADER OF DENMARK'S CONSERVATIVE PARTY, POUL SCHLUTER, HAS UNDERTAKEN THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE TAIWAN OPERA AND IS CAUSING THE GOVERNMENT EMBARRASSMENT BY CONTRASTING THE DANISH STAND WITH THAT OF ITS SCANDINAVIAN NEIGHBORS, TWO OF WHICH ARE CONSIDERED MORE "RADICAL" ON THIS ISSUE THAN THE DANES THEMSELVES. MOST RECENTLY, SCHLUTER HAS ASSERTED TO THE PRESS THAT ACCORDING TO HIS SOUNDINGS A MAJORITY IN THE FOLKETING WOULD OPEN DENMARK'S DOORS TO THE TAIWANESE. THE OPERA'S SCHEDULED ITINERARY WOULD HAVE THEM ARRIVE IN DENMARK ON SEPTEMBER 27 FROM GOTEBOG, SWEDEN. IT IS CONSEQUENTLY QUESTIONABLE WHETHER AN APPEARANCE IN

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PAGE 03 COPENH 03128 171307Z

DENMARK COULD BE DELAYED UNTIL AFTER THE OPENING OF THE FOLKETING ON OCTOBER 5. SCHLUTER COULD, HOWEVER, ASK FOR A MEETING OF THE FOLKETING'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. IF HIS POSITION IS UPHELD IN THE COMMITTEE, AT THE MINIMUM THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD INCREASE AND PERHAPS ITS EARLIER DECISION MIGHT EVEN BE REVERSED.

4. THE MFA HAS RECEIVED REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE CHINESE EMBASSY HERE THAT THE PRC WOULD REGARD APPEARANCES IN DENMARK BY THE TAIWANESE OPERA GROUP AS AN "UNFRIENDLY" ACT. ALTHOUGH THE DANES ARE NOT SURE WHAT THE CHINESE MEAN BY THIS, THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT THE DANISH ACTION MIGHT BE INTERPRETED IN PEKING AS SOME SORT OF SIGNAL AT A TIME OF THE INTERREGNUM AND CONFUSION FOLLOWING MAO'S DEATH. FURTHERMORE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY FOR THE DANES, THEY ARE FRETTING OVER THE POSSIBILITY THAT DANISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN CHINA - WHICH ARE LONG-STANDING AND RELATIVELY IMPORTANT - MIGHT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AT A TIME WHEN DENMARK IS UTILIZING EVERY MEANS TO COUNTER A SERIOUS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT.
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